

M A R R I A G E

by

Benjamin M. Owens

December 12, 1941

for

The Tau Beta Pi Association

SUMMARY

Everyone who is physically and mentally fit should, if possible, plan on marriage. It is a duty and a privilege to be able to perpetuate mankind, otherwise the world would no longer exist. To be able to make a happy and successful marriage, one must choose a partner to his own liking with whom he must spend the rest of his days. Marriage must be built on a strong foundation and the first few years must be free from worry and debt, having simplicity of home surroundings, in order not to complicate and mar the intimate friendship which should exist. Marriage should not become stagnant, but must progress and maintain interest and cooperation on the part of both. Participation in entertainments for pleasure should be a part of the curriculum of every married couple. The complete success of any marriage will depend upon the individual's own attitude toward his position and responsibilities.

MARRIAGE

Many volumes have been written upon that well-known but little understood subject of marriage. It is a duty and a privilege for every healthy and sane person to take such a step, in order to insure the perpetuation of mankind through the medium of marriage and family and to raise the social standards of a new generation. As is written in Ecclesiastes, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up."

The helps and hindrances to married happiness can be lumped under one word, personalities, which include ones temperament, mannerisms, tastes and the like. The individualities, likes and dislikes, desires and needs, and everything that pertains to an individual, makes it impossible to set down a specified set of rules which anyone might follow for a successful, happy marriage. There are, however, many hints and suggestions which can enable a man, or a woman, contemplating marriage, to make the best choice and give him, or her, some idea of what is necessary for a successful marriage.

COURTING DAYS

During the courting stage the young man or woman should seek to know as many agreeable, companionable persons of the opposite sex as possible, with backgrounds essentially similar. Having a great number of acquaintances makes it possible to pick or choose the one with whom you wish to spend the rest of your days.

You might ask yourself, does he or she wear well? If you become bored now, think of what you may have to endure later. This wearing quality of interest is not as easy to find out as some other things. This interest in each other should continue to grow and not diminish. Be careful of one who is tied to her mother's apron strings, who has no initiative of her own, nor any backbone. Be able to take it, 'you know what they call it in the army,' to meet disappointments, hardships, and the testing of ideals that must appear.

THE THRESHOLD OF MARRIAGE

When seriously contemplating marriage, one should ask himself; am I free from debt?; are others dependent on me?; where shall I live?; and can I see my way clear for marriage? Do not marry when either is in debt or while others are dependent upon you. It mars the chance for happiness and gives rise to money quarrels and makes it even more difficult to make both ends meet. It will take a lot of sacrificing on the part of both at first, in order to set up pleasant home surroundings. A small town is a better place to begin marriage than a city unless your work requires it, due to transportation or other difficulties. In a small town friendships come easier, life is simpler and usually a great deal less expensive. It takes all these things in order to start out on the right foot and the help you will get in the pleasure of friendships at the start will mean a great deal in building a strong foundation upon which to maintain happiness. It is a known fact that the divorce rate is much higher in the city than in the

country. More marriages are wrecked by too much free time than by too many home tasks to perform. Plan to have a home of your own and not with inlaws.

AFTER THE BIG STEP

The wedding shuts one gate and opens another. The longings and dreams of courtship end and the supreme intimacy of life begins. The opportunities for gaining happiness are not easily won and it will take a lot of sacrificing and hard work on the part of both. One might ask, how can I make my marriage successful? This can only be accomplished by complete cooperation on the part of the two concerned. Build a union or tie that is just and fair to both. Decisions must be made on the basis of what is good for both and not a selfish or narrow wish of either. Always have respect for the other member of the marriage. Avoid self-centered engrossment in your own work and don't let your work become too much a part of you. Take time, at least once a week, to get out and have a good time. Above all, have complete trust in each other. Remember to make every day count, since there can be no holding on to the present, nor seeking to turn back to the past.

Marriage makes money go. In order to make your money go farther, prepare an orderly adequate budget. The needs for a materially wholesome life are few but sufficient and are listed as follows: (1) A clean and decent house or apartment to meet your budget, (2) Sufficient wholesome food to maintain health (Remember that 18¢ worth of good hamburger has as much food value as 60¢ worth of porter-house steak), (3) Clothing sufficient for

warmth and decency (A \$50.00 coat will function as well as a \$1,000 mink coat), (4) A margin of money in a savings account for insurance, medical care and emergencies, and (5) A little more to spend on pure fun (Don't let your need to save make your life dull and drab). Use good common judgment in all matters pertaining to money and don't let money quarrels become a part of your everyday life.

HARMONY IN MARRIAGE

In order to have harmony in marriage, each should be interested in the other's work or pleasure and be an active part of it. If she enjoys art and finds an art exhibit worthwhile, don't be a dumb male and say that this means nothing to you; let her teach you what pictures can mean. If she enjoys good music, going to concerts or listening to the radio, try to share her pleasure and discover what it is that really gives her satisfaction. In other words, if either has a favorite sport or hobby, the other should try to join in, at least in the evident satisfaction it gives. Just going to the movies or sitting on the sidelines watching others play is not the ideal joint use of leisure. Young couples should actually do something together.

Marriage is, therefore, more than just placing a ring upon a finger and saying, "I do." It is a great institution and is filled with many successes and pleasures if one has faith and tries to understand it. Build it on a strong foundation and it will last forever; a weak foundation will soon crumble.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIGELOW, W. F.: "Good Housekeeping Marriage Book,"
Prentice Hall, Inc., New York, 1938.

ANTHONY, J. J.: "Marriage and Family Problems,"
Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., New York, 1939, First Edition.

EVANS, C. B. S.: "Man and Woman In Marriage," Bruce-
Roberts, Inc., Chicago, 1931.

FAIRFAX, B.: "Problems of Love and Marriage,"
McLoughlin Bros., Inc., Springfield, Mass., 1931.

KEYSERLING, H. X.: "The Book of Marriage," Harcourt,
Brace and Company, New York, 1927.